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وزارة الخارجية
سفارة المملكة العربية السعودية في واشنطن
ROYAL EMBASSY OF SAUDI ARABIA
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 15, 1978

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CA
Royal Embassy of Saudi Arab
(202) 483-6158

Saudi Arabia has a "special responsibility" to protect its borders and strategic oil resources - 25% of the world's proven oil reserves - against increasing extremist danger from a number of different directions, and that it the compelling reason the country has chosen for its defense the 60 U.S.-made F-15 fighter planes President Carter and Ford have approved for sale to the Saudis.

Those are the salient points of a personal letter and five-page accompanying statement sent by Saudi Arabian Ambassador Ali A. Alireza to all members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives today.

"Communist and extremist forces, including most recently in the Horn of Africa and the bordering state of the People's Democratic Republic of South Yemen," constitute a rising potential threat to Saudi Arabia and its strategic oil reserves, Alireza wrote. The hostility, which actually originates from various more distant sources, is against the kingdom's commitment to moderation in international economic and political affairs, including the country's firm opposition to the spread of communism, petroleum production and pricing policies fair to both the consuming and producing nations, maintenance of the health of the Free World economy and support for the dollar, and support for a comprehensive, just and prompt settlement in the Middle East.

The Saudi Ambassador said, "Saudi Arabia has a pressing need to replace its rapidly aging, British-made defense fighter planes," and the long lead time prevents getting the first deliveries "until late 1981 at the earliest and full defense capability not being reached until over a half decade from now." The statement accompanying the Ambassador's letter noted U.S. Defense Department study teams, as part of a continuing review, three years ago found the Kingdom needed to replace its defense fighter force and offered the F-15s to Saudi Arabia because of that.

Further, "as a practical matter," the Saudi statement continued, "supplier (United States) control is a major continuing factor in terms of spare parts, airfield and support equipment requirements, special pilot and ground crew training and other considerations;" and those provide ample time and opportunity to assure nothing amiss occurs.

As to "public reference to the F-15s in relation to Saudi Arabia's Tabuk military base which has existed since before World War II" and was provided air defense several years ago to protect the personnel there, the Saudi statement said, "as noted by Secretary Vance in Congressional testimony on March 9, 1978, the F-15s are of sufficient importance militarily that they would not be placed at an advance base like Tabuk where they would constitute an inviting target."

In the event the pending sale is postponed or not occur, Ambassador Alireza wrote, "since the Kingdom's obsolescent lightnings must in any event be replaced, Saudi Arabia would be forced to consider alternatives, including the purchase elsewhere of existing sophisticated aircraft and the possibility of helping to finance the development by someone else of advance aircraft comparable to the F-15s."

Alireza emphasized, however, "Saudi Arabia is prepared to purchase the 60 F-15s both for its own defense (Alireza's emphasis) and to protect vital interests of the United States and Free world."

The Saudi Ambassador said in his Congressional letter, "Over the course of the last forty years and especially in the mid-1970s, the United States and Saudi Arabia have come to share a special relationship on a broad range of basic matters, including particularly the following:

"a. Trade, with Saudi purchases from the United States approaching $5 billion in the current year and agreements with American firms for goods, services and projects beyond that already exceeding $25 billion.

"b. The overall economic development and well being of both countries --- Saudi Arabia, for instance, supplies almost a tenth of all the oil now being used by Americans and in turn looks to the U.S. for much of the know-how, equipment and technology which it needs for its development program.

"c. The health of the international economy, including most recently maintenance of the strength of the dollar.

"d. The assuring of moderation and stability in the Middle East.

"e. Essential support for the non-communist coalition of nations, including not only western Europe, Japan and other developed nations but also developing countries, to which Saudi Arabia devotes 15% of its annual income in the form of aid and interest-free loans."

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 66

At the request of Mr. GLENN, the Senator from Michigan (Mr. GRIFFIN) was added as a cosponsor of Senate Concurrent Resolution 66, relating to the disapproval of import relief to domestic producers of nuts, bolts, and large screws.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 72—SUBMISSION OF A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO COMBAT INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

Mr. CASE (for himself, Mr. STONE, Mr. MOYNIHAN, Mr. JAVITS, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. RIBICOFF, Mr. DURKIN, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. METZENBAUM, Mr. PERCY, Mr. ANDERSON, Mr. HEINZ, and Mr. BENTSEN) submitted the following concurrent resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

H. CON. RES. 72

Whereas a series of unprovoked terrorist attacks have been conducted against citizens of Israel, Egypt, and Jordan since President Sadat's trip to Jerusalem last November;

Whereas the attacks have resulted in the loss of life and the wounding of civilians, including several Jordanian citizens living on the West Bank, the editor of the Egyptian newspaper Al Ahram on February 18, 1978, and men, women and children who were trapped in a burning bus or deliberately shot during the attack in Israel March 11, 1978;

Whereas the Palestine Liberation Organization has publicly accepted responsibility for the March 11 attack; Now, therefore be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring) that

(1) Such acts of terrorism are strongly condemned and are obstacles to peace in the Middle East and thus are against the national interest of the United States;

(2) The Congress extends its condolences and deep sympathy to those wounded and the families of those killed in the terrorist attacks;

(3) The President should direct the Executive Branch to intensify its efforts to counter international terrorism including use of diplomatic, economic, and security measures taken unilaterally or in cooperation with other nations to terminate assistance received by (a) organizations, groups or individuals which commit or attempt to commit acts of terrorism and (b) governments which provide any assistance to organizations, groups and individuals which conspire to commit or actually commit terrorism.

(4) The President should report to Congress within 30 days after the adoption of this Resolution with respect to action the Executive Branch has taken to implement existing laws regarding terrorism, including Section 3(8) of the Export Administration Act of 1969, as amended and Section 18 of the International Security Assistance Act of 1977 in regard to countries cited under (5) which provide assistance to the PLO and other groups involved in terrorist activities.

(5) The President should report to Congress within 30 days on the nature and extent of the activities of the Palestine Liberation Organization office in New York.

(6) The President should report to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House of Representatives International Relations Committee within 30 days the names of nations which provide to the PLO and its constituent groups financial assistance, training, weapons, sanctuary, bases, escape routes, transportation assistance and documents and other forms of assistance in committing acts of terrorism.

● Mr. CASE. Mr. President, it is time for the United States and other nations to act more forcefully to combat international terrorism.

In recent weeks, terrorists have:

Brutally and deliberately slaughtered 34 persons in Israel.

Assassinated a leading Egyptian newspaper editor, a close friend of President Sadat.

Killed several prominent West Bank Arabs who favored moderate approaches to Middle East problems.

Threatened publicly to kill President Sadat.

Captured a government building in Holland and held more than 70 persons hostage until rescued by the Dutch Marines.

And today, kidnapped a former Prime Minister of Italy, killing his bodyguards.

Some of the terrorist groups might have been less active and deadly if there had been more vigorous efforts by this country and other responsible countries to curtail the resources being made available to the terrorists.

It is not solely a question of passing new laws, although tougher legislation is being drafted, administration officials have been reluctant to use laws already on the books that could help dissuade countries that have been providing assistance to the terrorists.

For example, the State Department recently approved the sale of an executive jet airliner to Libya, a nation which is a major supporter of extremist terrorist groups. That type of aircraft, with a range of 7,000 miles, is extremely useful in helping terrorists move from one country to another or helping them smuggle in terrorists. I made this point in a letter to the State Department on February 16.

The Department replied that the executive jet has "little potential to be employed in any militarily significant fashion by the Libyans." Apparently transportation of terrorists is not militarily significant in the State Department's view.

To the Department's credit, export licenses for two other passenger planes and for maintenance of C–130 transport planes were turned down. But that does not justify the sale of the executive jet.

It is regrettable that officials who are supposed to be concerned about terrorism would approve such a sale. In its reply, the State Department said the sale signals that:

We are not trying to prohibit all bilateral commercial exchanges, an important point in view of our major economic interests in Libya.

Even if one accepts that point—and I am not sure I do—there are other items we can continue to sell them rather than a plane so ideally suited for sneaking terrorists and weapons past the customs inspections which are slack at many airports.

I opposed the sale not because I thought the executive jet was potentially useful in military operations but because it could be so handy for terrorist operations.

I urge the President to reconsider the sale and refuse to allow the plane to be delivered until there is an across-the-board halt to Libya's support for terrorists. Citing Libya's recent refusal to allow hijacked planes to land there is not a sufficient sign of progress for they may have merely been trying to avoid bad publicity. It is the clandestine activities which cause more concern.

Another example of the State Department's mixing of signals concerns the financial support for the PLO which issued press statements saying that Al Fatah, its military arm, conducted the March 11 attack in Israel.

More than 2 months ago, on January 1, Al Fatah representative in Saudi Arabia made a broadcast on the Government-controlled Saudi radio thanking the Saudis for providing more than $42 million of aid to his group last year. There had been earlier press reports that the Saudis had been providing millions of dollars in aid to the PLO. Since President Sadat's courageous trip to Jerusalem last November there also have been reliable reports from a number of sources that the PLO was planning to take a more activist role. Yet, according to reports in the Washington Star and by the Associated Press, the top American official in Saudi Arabia said last week that he did not know of any effort to ask the Saudis to stop bankrolling the group.

Our Ambassador, John West, also was quoted by the Associated Press as saying the Saudis denied they were contributing to terrorist organizations of any kind. If he does not know that Al Fatah is a terrorist group, he should spend more of his time in Washington getting briefed instead of trying to persuade Members of Congress to approve selling 60 F–15's by telling them that the Saudis are backing moderate forces in the Middle East.

Tuesday, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, Mr. Alfred Atherton, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the United

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States had raised the funding issue with the Saudis over a period of years, including "quite recently."

There is reason to believe that the "quite recently" meant since this weekend after the PLO publicly admitted its role in terrorist activities.

From comments made by State Department and Saudi officials, it is obvious that the Saudis—at least so far—are turning down the approaches made to them regarding their funding of the PLO.

Mr. President, I am well aware of the frustrations in trying to counter terrorism and of the limits to what we can do to prod nations to stop giving assistance to international torrorists.

The Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Foreign Assistance, of which I am the ranking Republican member, has held hearings on the issue and will hold more. The Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs already has held hearings on Senator RIBICOFF's omnibus antiterrorism bill which I cosponsored. It is my hope that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will have an opportunity to act on it soon.

There are, however, existing laws which can and should be used more vigorously. I would like to point out in particular an amendment added to the Export Administration Act last year and signed into law by President Carter, which declares that it is national policy to use export controls to encourage other countries to take immediate steps against international terrorism. This section reads:

"(8) It is the policy of the United States to use export controls to encourage other countries to take immediate steps to prevent the use of their territory or resources to aid, encourage, or give sanctuary to those persons involved in directing, supporting, or participating in acts of international terrorism. To achieve this objective, the President shall make every reasonable effort to secure the removal or reduction of such assistance to international terrorists through international cooperation and agreement before resorting to the imposition of export controls."

I interpret the word "resources" in subsection (8) to include financial resources.

Mr. President, it is time that officials make more vigorous use of the laws, particularly when it comes to trying to cut off aid to outlaw groups which violate all standards of humanity by deliberately slaughtering as many people as possible.

I have no doubt that some administration officials will find all sorts of excuses for not wanting even to consider using export controls.

The administration faces a key test of its seriousness in opposing terrorism with action instead of words. The test cannot help but influence whether Congress will go along with the discretionary phrases of "wiggle room" the administration will want when Congress acts upon future antiterrorism legislation designed to close the existing loopholes.

Mr. President, with this background in mind, I am submitting, with a number of my colleagues of both parties, a resolution calling on the President to take additional actions to combat international terrorism.

● Mr. PERCY. Mr. President, I have chosen to be one of the original cosponsors of this resolution because I believe that greater efforts must be made to combat terrorism: The recent terrorist acts against citizens of Israel, Jordan, and Egypt demonstrate that terrorism remains one of the world's most intractable problems.

The outrageous raid against civilians in Israel was a premeditated murder both of innocent civilians and of the Israeli-Egyptian peace process as well. The obvious objective of the PLO attack was to poison the atmosphere for the Israeli-Egyptian peace negotiations. For this reason, all of us who seek a just peace should redouble our efforts to bring the parties together, while rejecting the destructive activities of the rejectionists.

The PLO cannot really believe that this criminal attack on innocent civilians will convince Israel to invite a PLO-dominated state to be its neighbor. On the contrary, Israel can now be expected to be even more adamant in its opposition to the PLO.●

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED FOR PRINTING

TAXES, TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 1977—H.R. 6715

AMENDMENT NO. 1737

(Ordered to be printed and referred to the Committee on Finance.)

Mr. McCLURE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the H.R. 6715, the Taxes, Technical Corrections Act of 1977.

NAVIGATION DEVELOPMENT ACT—H.R. 8309

AMENDMENT NO. 1733

(Ordered to be printed and to lie on the table.)

Mr. McCLURE (for himself and Mr. CHURCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by them, jointly, to the bill (H.R. 8309) to authorize certain public works on rivers for navigation and for other purposes.

AMENDMENT NO. 1734

(Ordered to be printed and to lie on the table.)

Mr. McCLURE submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill (H.R. 8309), supra.

NOTICES OF HEARINGS

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

● Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Select Committee on Small Business will hold a hearing on two bills before the committee, title I of S. 897, and S. 2733. The hearing will commence at 9 a.m. on Wednesday, March 22, 1978, in the committee's hearing room, room 424 of the Russell Building. Senator MCINTYRE will chair. A witness list will be announced before the hearing. For further information, please contact the committee office at 224–5175.●

CAPITAL FORMATION PROBLEMS OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED INDEPENDENT ENTERPRISES

● Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Select Committee on Small Business has scheduled a hearing on the capital formation problems of small- and medium-sized independent enterprises on May 15, 1978.

The hearing, to be chaired by Senator WEICKER, will commence at 9:30 a.m. at the American Stock Exchange, 86 Trinity Place, New York, N.Y.

Further information can be obtained from the committee offices, room 424D, Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510, telephone (202) 224–8497.●

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ABUSE

● Mr. HATHAWAY. Mr. President, I wish to announce that the Subcommittee on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse will hold a hearing on Friday, March 24, 1978, at 9 a.m. in the auditorium of the Eastern Maine Medical Center, Bangor, Maine. The purpose of the hearing is to examine the alcohol and drug abuse problems of youth, women, and other underserved groups and to consider alternative community responses. For further information regarding the hearings, please contact the subcommittee office at 224–8386.●

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS AND RESOURCES

● Mr. BUMPERS. Mr. President, on Tuesday, April 11, the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Resources of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources will hold a hearing on S. 74, a bill to amend the act of October 20, 1976 (Public Law 94–565) to include payments for lands on which certain semiactive or inactive military installations are located.

The hearing will be held in room 3110, Dirksen Senate Office Building and will begin at 10 a.m.

Anyone who wishes to testify at the hearing or who has questions concerning the hearing should contact Steven P. Quarles, counsel to the subcommittee at (202) 224–3349.

Anyone wishing to submit written statements for the hearing record should send them to the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Resources, room A–420 Senate Annex, Washington, D.C. 20510.●